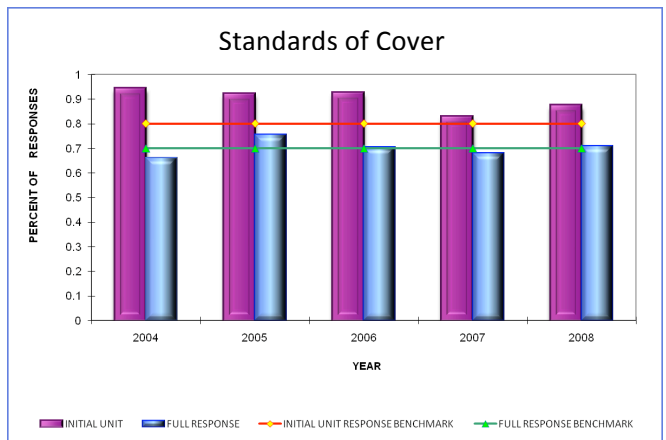
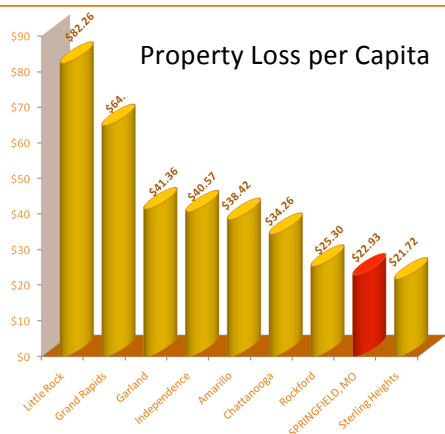
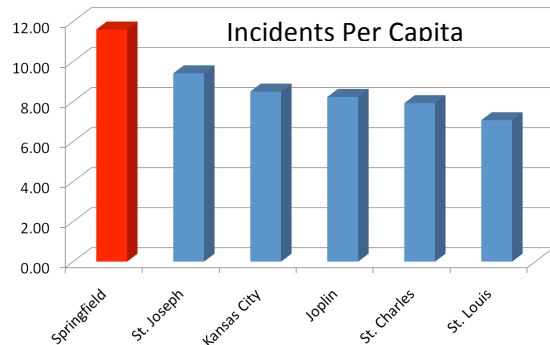
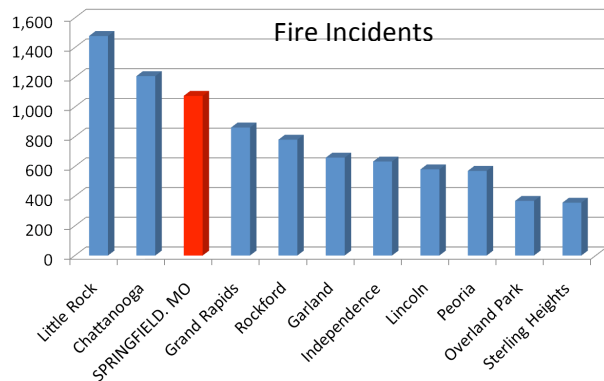


Springfield Fire Department

Departmental Overview and Impact of Hiring Freeze and Budget Cuts

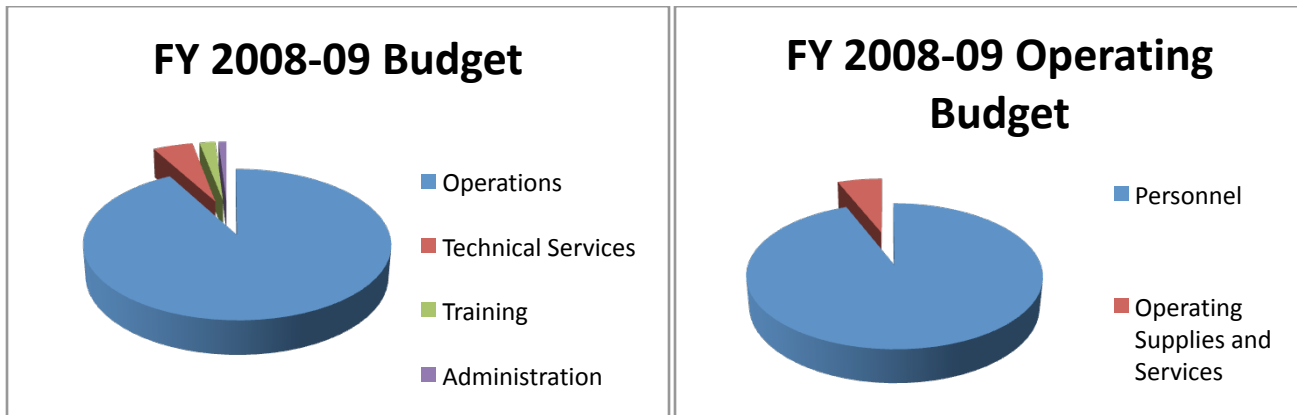
Overview

The SFD has 212 uniformed FTE's and 5 non-uniform FTE's when fully staffed. The department is divided into four major divisions including: Administration, Operations, Technical Services and Training. The Administration division is headed by the Fire Chief and has 5 administrative staff which provides all clerical and administrative support to the department. The Operations division consists of 12 fire stations with 199 personnel providing emergency response to fire, medical, hazardous material, water rescue, technical rescue and other incidents to which the department is requested. In addition, the division conducts public education, and fire inspections. The Technical Services division is staffed with 8 personnel providing code enforcement, plan reviews, public education, fire investigation and bomb squad response. The Training division has 4 personnel to provide required training in fire suppression, EMS, haz mat, water rescue, technical rescue, driver's training, and recruit training as well as oversight of the fire department's safety program.



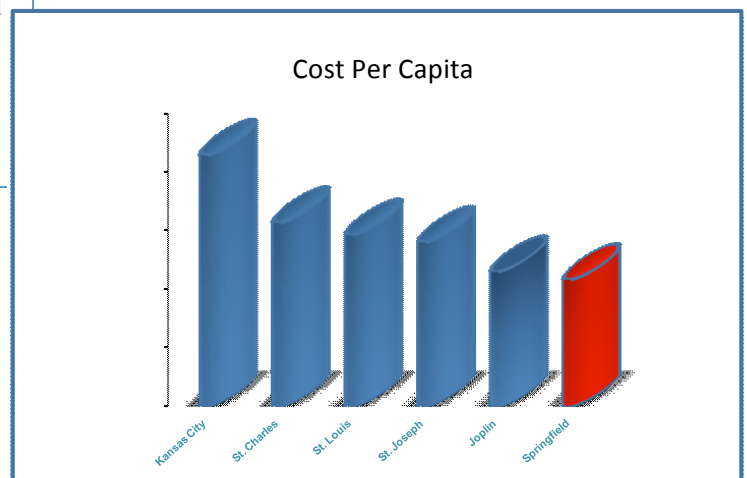
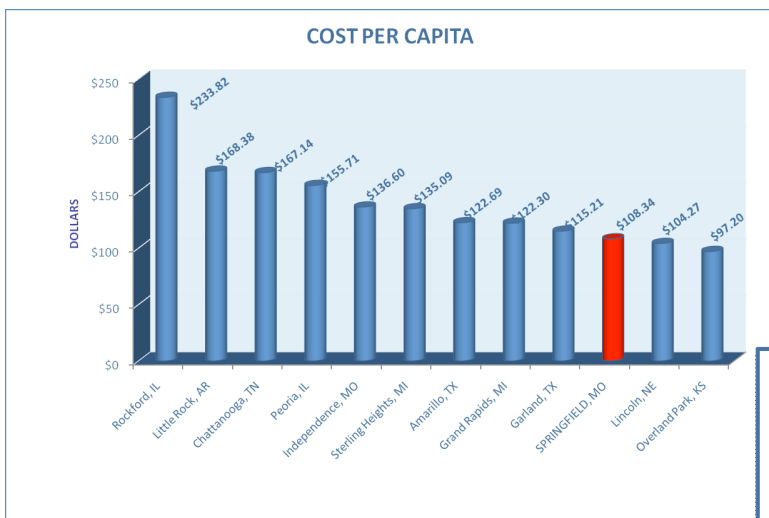
Budget

The SFD budget for FY 2008-09 was \$18,209,082 with 94% of the cost due to personnel. Of the personnel costs, 60% was for salaries and 40% was for benefits, primarily due to the pension contribution rate. The remaining 6% of the total budget was for operating supplies and services which includes fuel, turnout gear, vehicle repairs, minor tools, etc. For the divisional breakdown of the budget, the Operations division accounted for 92% of the total budget while the Technical Services division accounted for 5%, the Training Division for 2% and the remaining 1% was for Administration expenses.



Efficiency

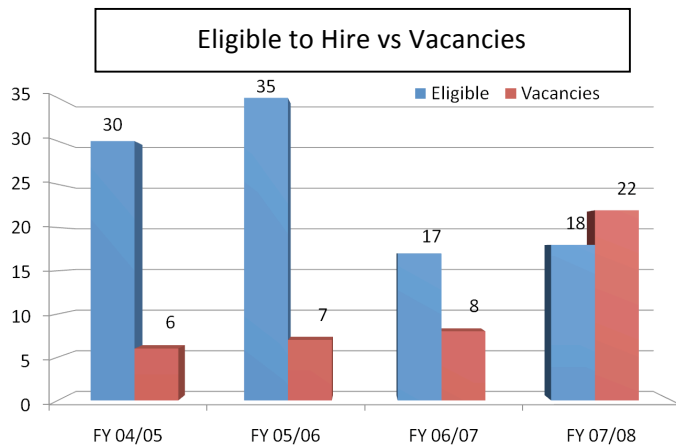
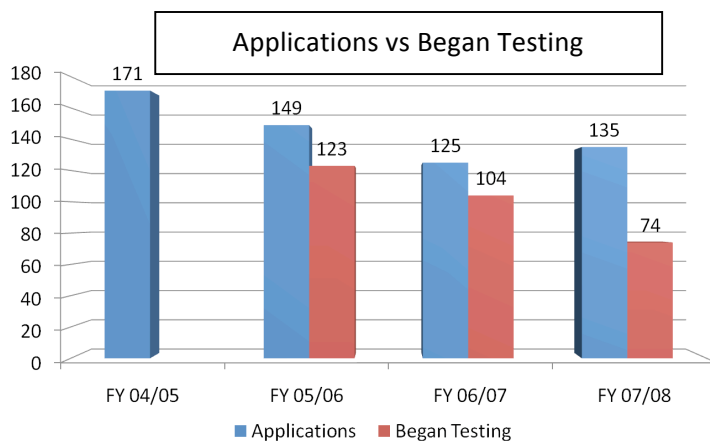
The SFD benchmarks its services against 11 other comparable Midwest cities. The cost per capita for the fire department is the third lowest of the group at \$108.34 per citizen per year. The department is very efficient even with the high pension costs.



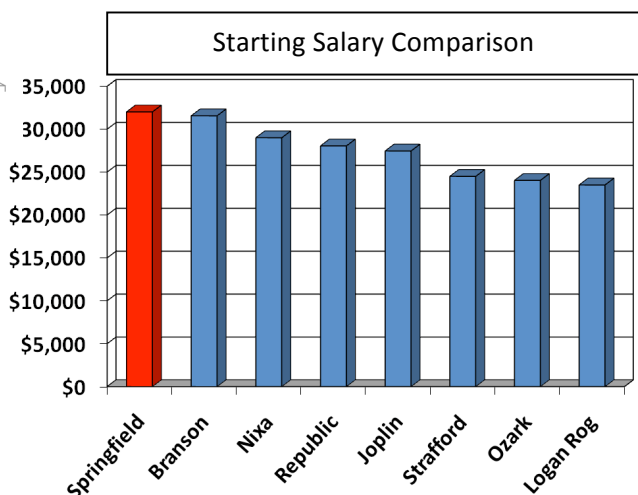
Impact of Hiring Freeze and Budget cuts

Recruitment and Retention

The SFD has 212 authorized uniformed FTE's; however, the department will have 23 unfilled uniformed positions by the end of June. Since the pension issue first reached public awareness in 2005, the department has seen a steady decline in the number applicants as well as the number of applicants showing up for testing which has translated into a much smaller number of qualified candidates that successfully complete the process. Conversely, the number of positions that need to be filled has increased dramatically this year due to retirements and resignations. Currently, the fire department has 17 qualified candidates on its hiring list but will have 23 vacancies that need to be filled when the hiring freeze is lifted. This is contrasted to FY 2005-06 when the department had 35 qualified applicants vying for 7 positions.



Retirement Facts			
	FY 2003-2005	FY 2006-2008	Current FY
% waiting until maximum retirement	69%	26%	15%
Average years of service at retirement	24.7	22.8	21.8



Operational Changes due to staffing levels

The SFD has historically run a very lean department in terms of staffing levels. The inability to replace vacancies has eroded the margin between the number of personnel assigned on a shift and the minimum number required to operate all apparatus.

The department is faced with four choices: a) hire personnel to raise the number of personnel assigned to work each day back to normal levels; b) increase overtime to pay personnel to work on their off-duty shift in order to maintain minimum staffing; c) decrease the minimum staffing required each shift by shutting down apparatus; or d) a combination of each.

The department has taken several steps to keep as many positions filled and to save other funds to be used for overtime. This includes leaving some non-operations positions vacant including an Assistant Fire Chief, a Fire Marshal and a Training Captain. It also includes the elimination of all non-departmental training, reducing the number of apparatus dispatched to calls, reducing the number of calls to which the department responds, having Chief Officers run calls at night and on weekends, and not recalling staffing for specialty teams such as haz mat, water rescue and technical rescue when they have insufficient staffing.

In April, the department began shutting down up to one apparatus per day when staffing was unavailable in order to save the cost of overtime. To date, this has been done on a rotational basis; however, should this continue into the future, this will need to be reevaluated and the closure of a station would likely occur. In the interim, the department was allotted some additional overtime funds to keep from having to shut down multiple apparatus per day as staffing levels fall even lower.

Impacts

As a result of these changes, several impacts can be expected. First and foremost, the level of service to the citizens is being reduced. Response times will go up which will result in additional property damage. It also increases the probability of additional injury and even death. While fire department personnel go to great lengths to protect the citizens, longer response times and insufficient on-scene personnel are factors they are unable to overcome.

Second, the department is in the process of being evaluated by the Insurance Services Offices (ISO) which most insurance companies use to guide their fire insurance rates for home and business owners. During the last evaluation, the City attained a Class 2 rating. The City needed at least 80 points out of 100 for a Class 2 rating. The City scored 80.53 points. The department has made improvements in some areas since the last grading, but there have been areas that will work against the department. Staffing is one of those areas. It remains to be determined whether the City will retain its very favorable fire insurance rating.

Third, the department could lose its accredited status. The accredited status provides the citizens with the assurance the department is providing the services at a level promised to the citizens. It also serves as assurance the department is working to improve the quality of service to the community. The department may not be able to meet the minimum standards established by the Commission on Fire Service Accreditation.

Summary

The Springfield Fire Department:

- has greater demands than peer departments;
- works at a lower cost than peer departments;
- is experiencing recruitment and retention problems;
- is compensated below regional peers;
- is compensated slightly above local peers, but the margin is shrinking;
- may lose its accredited status;
- may lose its Class 2 ISO rating;
- is experiencing significant morale issues;
- but most importantly, is reducing its service levels to the citizens which means they are at increased risk.